

BOARD OF HEALTH
Minutes for Wednesday, February 23, 2022, 7:00 PM
Remote Participation

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| 7:00 | Community Input |
| 7:05 | COVID-19 – discussion <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Community Status▪ Mask Mandate Discussion |
| 7:30 | PH 147 Westford Street – septic system upgrade requiring Local Waiver <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 15.211 Distances – leaching area 91’ from wetlands, 100’ required |

DISCUSSION ITEMS

- FY23 Budget Update
- PFA’s status report
- Minutes:2/9/22
- Administrative Reports

NEW BUSINESS

The meeting agenda lists all topics reasonably anticipated by the Board of Health at the time of posting. Additional topics not anticipated may be discussed at the meeting under the agenda item New Business.

Attendance members: Jean J Barry, David Erickson, Catherine Galligan

Attendance nonmembers: Fantasia Health Agent, Nathaniel Cataldo, Rob Frado, Chris Johnson, Amy Livens, Tricia McGean

1. Community Input

At 19:04 Erickson opened the meeting.

Amy Livens made the following statement:

"I feel it is appropriate at this time for Carlisle's mask mandate to be lifted. We are in a different place then we were in 2020 and 2021. We now have therapies, data, high vaccination rates and natural immunity. My biggest concern is for our children's mental health. They have been greatly affected by the pandemic. Children, like us all, need to see faces and connect. Please set a date to give us hope! Please consider following Governor Baker's deadline of dropping mask mandate on February 28th."

2. Covid-19

Fantasia said that from Jan 1, 2020 - Dec 31, 2021, there were 374 confirmed cases. There were 284 confirmed cases in Jan 2022 but from Feb 1,2022 to Feb 19 there were only 21 cases, and many were family members of infected people, although there are many family members who are doing rapid home testing and whose numbers are therefore unknown. When McGean talks to people they frequently say others in the family were infected. Fortunately, there have been no hospitalizations due to the Omicron variant and McGean confirms that most cases are mild with a moderate fever for a few days and sinus infection-like issues. Most cases start with a scratchy throat. Barry recommends changing from a mandate to an advisory effective no later than the end of February. See attached notes.

After some continuing discussion Barry moved to lift the mask mandate effective immediately and establish a mask advisory consistent with the CDC & Massachusetts Department of Public Health. Galligan seconded the motion which was then approved unanimously.

3. 147 Westford Street

Galligan moved to open the public hearing for 147 Westford Street, the motion was seconded and approved

Cataldo was present for Stamski and McNary. There was a question that came up in the afternoon as to whether the system was in a 500-year flood plain. There was some discussion of this but it was eventually stated that the site chosen is probably the best site on the property and is in any case an improvement over the previous system and is in compliance with State requirements and so does not require a state waiver. Frado was comfortable with the assumptions being made. Cataldo agreed to keep the PH open to allow for the Conservation Commission scheduled meeting.

Galligan moved to approve plan entitled "Sewage Disposal Plan, 147 Westford Street, Map 15, Parcel 43-3, designed by Stamski & McNary, Inc. revised February 16, 2022 and grant a setback waiver from leach field to wetlands (91' provided; 100' required) under local upgrade approval, contingent on a floor plan verifying the house is a 4-bedroom house and an Order of Conditions from the Conservation Commission that would not affect the septic system design. Barry seconded the motion which was then approved unanimously.

4. FY23 Budget Update

Galligan attended the Select Board/FinComm meeting discussing the town operational budget. The BOH had asked for a total of 11 additional hours, going from 24 to 35 hours/week. Of those hours, 8.5 would come from the tax base and 2.5 from 53c account. The Select Board was amenable to more hours, but FinCom was not in support noting that the BOH had received a 15% increase in the operating budget for FY22 (this was for the Public Health Nurse position, which had previously been funded by pilot grants for multiple years). FinCom eventually included a 9.1% increase (as opposed to the 12.3% requested). It is a step in the right direction but we will continue to try to communicate why we need the full amount requested.

5. PFA's status

Fantasia and Kris attended a DEP workshop this morning and have sent out a link. Fantasia noted that the state does not currently regulate private wells. There is a Model Private Well Guideline that many communities use. There is also a Bill before the Legislature for a uniform code for private wells similar to what Title 5 does for septic system. A uniform code would still allow for more stringent local regulations.

Administrative reports

Fantasia provided a document detailing the administrative reports. Fantasia summarized the report, but I am copying it here for the record:

Minutes

2/9/22 minutes: It was noted that Ginny Turner should be added to the list of attendees. Galligan moved to accept the amended minutes, Barry seconded, and the motion was approved unanimously.

Adjourn

Next meeting is set for 3/09/22.

Barry moved to adjourn, Galligan seconded, meeting adjourned at 20:26

Respectfully submitted,

David Erickson,
Recorder

Meeting Materials

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

February 23, 2022

Public Health Excellence Grant – We have hired Kelly Cael as the Grant Coordinator. Kelly was the former health director in Hopkinton and managed a similar grant collaborative. We are in the process of preparing a mission statement and goals so we have a road map on future activities. Next step will be to hire a FT Inspector and FT PHN.

Assistant Health Agent – report from Select Board meeting 2/22/22. (Galligan)

Ongoing Projects

Large Development Compliance
Operations and Maintenance Template
Presentation on PFAs
Ferns PWS

Mask Mandate Notes (JBarry)

Carlisle Mask Mandate 2/23/22

Recommendation:

Change the mask mandate to a MASK ADVISORY—follow the metrics set out by the CDC & Mass DPH, effective no later than 2/28/22.

- Masks= “no real (physical) harm” but over a period of time it can have a significant negative impact on our psyche
- Ongoing mandate—could have negative consequences with regard to compliance if the DPH/BOH needs to recommend future unpleasant restrictions in the event of a future surge (e.g. next Fall/Winter)
- Mask Mandate—should be a temporary measure, used during a time of extreme danger (e.g. during the Delta + Omicron surge). We need to be able to pivot quickly and reverse course when the time is right.
- Masks will not disappear by recommending an advisory, just not mandated. We will all continue to wear masks in high risk situations (e.g. indoor activities, medical facilities, etc.)
- IN SYNCH with current CDC + Mass DPH guidelines (masks are recommended for high risk individuals and anyone unvaccinated, indoors in areas where cases are high). There have never been any federal mask mandates and MA has not had a mask mandate since 2020.
- IN SYNCH with DESE + Carlisle School (who submitted a request with DESE to end their mask mandate).
- IN SYNCH with surrounding towns (e.g. Concord + Westford) who established a mask mandate during Omicron surge and recently lifted the mandate.
- COVID-19 Vaccine Boosters—recent studies show that boosters maintain a strong T cell response against many COVID-19 variants (even better than with natural infection)
- Omicron re-infections are rare, including with the BA.2 variant (according to a recently published Danish study)
- Background Immunity—very high rate of vaccination/boosters in town, very high rate of exposure to various subtypes of COVID-19. We should not delay lifting the mandate for fear of the *possibility* of a future variant that *could* be dangerous.
- TAKE HOME POINT: mask mandates (or any other type of mandate) should be used judiciously during times of extreme danger. We need to take care when using such tools and not overuse or abuse them.